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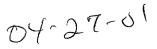
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE





TRANSMITTAL LETTER AND CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

To: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks,

Washington, D.C. 20231

From: Kasey C. Christie (Tel. 509-324-9256; Fax 509-323-8979)

Customer No. 22801

22801 PATENT_TRADEMARK OFFIC

The following enumerated items accompany this transmittal letter and are being submitted for the matter identified in the above caption.

- 1. Specification—title page, plus 43 pages, including 39 claims and Abstract
- 2. Transmittal letter including Certificate of Express Mailing
- 3. 4 Sheets Formal Drawings (Figs. 1-4)
- 4. Return Post Card

Large Entity Status [x]

Small Entity Status []

Date: 4-24-2001

Kasey C. Ohristie Reg. No. 40,559

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that the items listed above as enclosed are being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as either first class mail, or Express Mail if the blank for Express Mail No. is completed below, in an envelope addressed to The Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231, on the below-indicated date. Any Express Mail No. has also been marked on the listed items.

Express Mail No. (if applicable)

EL764086051

Date: 4/24/2001

By: Cheryl K. Boies